

Standard Precautions for School Staff

Standard Precautions are precautions that all school staff need to take at all times in order to reduce their risk of infection from blood (Hepatitis and HIV) and body fluids (vomit, saliva, sputum, i.e., mucous from the lungs, stool, urine, drainage from nose, drainage from cuts, wounds or sores). These precautions require forethought in planning ahead to avoid exposure. When using standard precautions, it is assumed that every person is potentially infectious.

Pathogens (germs capable of causing disease, i.e., bacteria, viruses, fungi, parasites) can enter your body through cuts or abrasions (any opening in the skin), eyes, nose, mouth or mucous membranes.

Protect yourself by following these standard precaution steps:

1. **GLOVES** - Always wear disposable gloves when it is anticipated that you will come in direct contact with blood or body fluids (nosebleeds, bleeding abrasions, loose /lost teeth, handling clothing soiled by urine, feces, vomit or blood, and when diapering children). Gloves are used one time for each person you come in contact with. If gloves are not immediately available, use another barrier such as a paper towel. When removing gloves, remove glove from one hand. Remove glove from second hand, tucking first glove inside. Do not touch the outside of the glove with your bare skin. Throw soiled gloves away in lined trashcan. Wash hands with soap and water. Hand sanitizer is acceptable, but wash hands with soap and water as soon as possible.

Latex free gloves are provided to each teacher in their first aid Baggies provided by the clinic at the beginning of the school year. If you need more, please ask the school nurse.

2. **DECONTAMINATION** - The area must be cleaned with the school-approved disinfectant. Clorox wipes and Lysol type products will kill many infectious organisms but will not kill blood borne pathogens. Contact the custodial staff for clean up of blood or body spills. Discard any contaminated materials in a lined trash container.
3. **HAND WASHING** - Hand washing is the most important step in preventing the spread of disease! Use liquid soap and warm water. Wash vigorously for at least 15 seconds. Rinse under warm running water. Turn off faucet with a paper towel.
4. **WASTE DISPOSAL** - For non-regulated waste (band-aids, bandages, gauze sponges, facial tissues, cotton balls) place in lined trashcan. For regulated waste (syringes, lancets, needles, diabetic strips, **contaminated glass**) place in red sharps container in clinic. For regulated waste containing liquid or semi-liquid blood and other potentially infectious materials and items that would release

liquids when compressed (clothing, diapers, etc.) dispose of in red biohazard liner. (Contact Custodian)

Common Diseases and Their Modes of Transmission

AIDS, Hepatitis, STD's –**Exposure to Blood/Body fluids**

Varicella (chicken pox), Measles, Tuberculosis, colds, cough, throat infection –**Airborne**

Colds, cough, throat infection, influenza, mumps, meningitis – **Droplet (coughing or sneezing, laughing)**

Diarrhea, Impetigo, Lice, MRSA – **Contact**

Vectors (Insects) – Mosquitoes, fleas, ticks

Note: MRSA (Staph) and Hepatitis B can live on inanimate surfaces for at least one week. Vaccines are available for Hepatitis A and B.

Your students will need to understand the different aspects of these precautions depending on their age. The following are important skills to emphasize to them:

- Good hand washing skills
- Immediate notification of an adult if there is an accident
- NEVER touch blood directly

Also, good hygiene is the key to preventing the spread of MRSA (Staph) and other illnesses. Please follow these practices and remind children to do the same:

- Wash hands often with soap and water or use hand sanitizer
- Cover open wounds
- Do not share personal items like towels, clothing or sports equipment
- See your family medical provider for a skin infection that does not heal.

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